

As a people Canadians have a good deal to be thankful for. Under the protection of Great Britain they have been able to reach a position which may well be envied by many communities of the old world. Those questions which have long kept the countries of Europe in a state of constant agitation do not exist to disturb the tranquillity of the Dominion. No great landlords occupy the largest portion of the territorial domains of Canada, but every man of industrious habits can win for himself a comfortable home, and become a landed proprietor without any of those difficulties of transfer which gladden the hearts of English lawyers. The only land question, which occupied the attention of Canadian statesmen, was the old system of Seigniorial Tenure—a relic of the feudal times of France—but it was soon settled on principles that were fair to both seignior and tenant. Primogeniture was abolished very many years ago in Canada, and property is now generally divided among the children of a family. All respectable and industrious men can exercise the privilege of voting under a Dominion franchise, which is on the very borders of universal suffrage.* No legal connection exists between Church and State, but all denominations depend on the voluntary contributions of their respective members. Of course Canada must have her difficulties to face in the future. Her statesmen are called upon to legislate for the interests of five million people—soon to double in numbers—inhabiting provinces with diverse interests. They have assumed heavy financial obligations, which it will require all the resources of the country to meet without heavily burdening the people. In the absence of race conflicts for many years, and in the presence of the new spirit of energy and enterprise brought into every sphere of political and commercial life by the Confederation, Canada has prospered, and her people have been hitherto happy and contented. To the Confederation the French Canadians have always given an unqualified adhesion, inasmuch as it affords every necessary protection to their peculiar interests. It has practically made of Quebec a French province, and at the same time enabled its representatives in the Dominion Parliament to exercise a large, sometimes a controlling, influence over the administration of the day. Under no other system of government would it be possible for them to possess the same weight they do now in the federal councils. Unfortunately sometimes for the best interests of that province, the people exhibit the impulsive, excitable temperament which is the natural heritage of a French race.

* In the province of Ontario there is now universal suffrage, only limited by a residence qualification.